

# From the G.C. President

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**! DATELINE TANZANIA AND MALAWI:** Our flight took us south from Entebbe, Uganda, over the birthplace of the mighty Nile, directly across Lake Victoria, to our destination, Mwanza in Tanzania. With a population of just under 30 million, Tanzania is, in both territory and population, one of the larger countries in eastern Africa. The Tanzanian Union's 163,000+ members are organized into three conferences and three missions. With 117 ordained ministers to care for 2,723 congregations, (an average of 19 congregations per pastor) evangelistic leadership and primary spiritual nurture for the members is provided by the church elders and deacons.

In 1903, two Adventist missionaries from Germany, A. E. Enns and E. Enlers, came to Tanzania to preach the messages of the three angels of Revelation. They began their work in the Pare mountains in northeastern Tanzania. Their first baptism was five years later when, in April of 1908, their first six were baptized. By 1911 four mission stations had been established, and by 1916 forty-six schools were operating in the Pare mountains. In 1913, a missionary zeal was evidenced among the Pare people who had accepted Christ and four Pare families volunteered to take the message to distant lands including Uganda and Kenya. So began our work in Eastern Africa.

Fifteen thousand believers from northwestern Tanzania attended a worship service, Sunday afternoon, (January 22), in a stadium in Mwanza on the shores of Lake Victoria. After a visit to Kibidula Farms, a mission outpost in southern Tanzania operated by Riverside Farms (a supporting ministry based in Zambia), the next stop was Arusha in northern Tanzania where we visited Tanzania Adventist College.

I must admit to being somewhat mystified that the small, out-of-the-way community of Same (pronounced Sáh-meh) was next on our schedule. Hot and arid, Same is located at the foot of the South Pare mountains a few miles from where the first Adventist missionaries established a mission station. The Northeast Tanzania Conference was in the process of moving their conference headquarters to this site, including all the staff homes. About 2,000 believers gathered under the hot sun as we walked around the nine houses and conference office that are under construction. All the districts divided up into nine groups, and each group accepted the challenge of providing the money (about US\$20,000 each) and volunteer labor to build one house. All the houses, and the first phase of the conference office, should be completed within the next four months. The spirit of unity exemplified by the laity, both in this construction project and their approach to evangelism, was truly an inspiration.

It was in 1989 that the Adventist message was first

taken to the conservative Muslim island nation of Zanzibar (that became part of the Tanzania Federation in 1960). A medical clinic was the entering wedge that opened the doors for the gospel. Today, we have more than 100 new Adventists on this island with a total population of 600,000. What a joy it was to participate in the inauguration of the new "House of Prayer" (the term church is prohibited). The neighboring island of Pemba (politically part of Zanzibar) is their next target, and work will begin as soon as \$50,000 has been raised to cover the cost of the clinic and chapel.

We returned to Dar es Salaam (Port of Peace—Tanzania's capital), after the Wednesday morning visit to Zanzibar, to meet with over 4,000 believers who attended a 3 p.m. meeting. Thursday morning we paid a courtesy visit to the President of Tanzania, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, and in the afternoon flew to Nairobi, had an evening meeting with the workers, and left before dawn on Friday morning for the country of Malawi.

We landed in Lilongwe Friday morning. Malawi, rightly called "the warm heart of Africa," is (compared to its neighbors) a very small country, nestled between Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania, and dominated by beautiful Lake Malawi (365 miles long by 52 miles wide). The influence of the 164,000+ Seventh-day Adventists in this country of 9 million was apparent when, after visiting our dental/optical clinic, we went to the State House for an appointment with Malawi president, Bakili Muluzi. There I met three Adventists who are ministers of government and members of his cabinet. Another Adventist was recently appointed as Governor of the Bank of Malawi.

Friday afternoon we drove south, along the border with Mozambique, to Blantyre, stopping to visit scenic Lake View Seminary overlooking Lake Malawi. Early Sabbath morning we drove out of Blantyre to visit Malamulo Mission and Hospital. Founded in 1902, Malamulo is one of the earliest Adventist mission stations in Africa. After speaking to 20,000 believers attending Sabbath morning services in a Blantyre stadium, we flew north to Lilongwe. Arriving Sabbath afternoon at the stadium in a tropical downpour, I was startled to find 10,000 in attendance, over 3,000 of whom stood in the rain for several hours to participate in the worship service! Such commitment is hard to describe.

Sabbath night we boarded the plane to begin our 28 hours of travel that would bring us back to Washington on Sunday, thus concluding an intense itinerary, but one that was very satisfying for it provided an opportunity to speak to an estimated 65,000 believers.